

Human Services—Systems to Monitor Training Provider Compliance Follow-up

SUMMARY

In 2008 we audited the former Department of Employment and Immigration's systems for delivering training to Albertans who need to improve their employment skills. We made three recommendations.¹ In 2012 we reported the department had implemented two of three recommendations. In the current year we conducted follow-up work to assess the department's progress in implementing the final outstanding recommendation regarding implementing policies, procedures and outcome reports for monitoring training provider compliance.

BACKGROUND

The department provides funding that allows eligible learners to upgrade their employment skills or prepare for further training. The department's delivery model allows learners to select a training provider. If the program is approved and the learner is eligible, the department pays tuition directly to the training provider.

The department pays for training through four main types of providers—private vocational schools, accredited schools, private providers and public post-secondary institutions.

The Department of Human Services has a process to follow up with training providers to review monitoring results and develop action plans to deal with non-compliance matters. However, we found the processes for follow-up on non-compliance were inconsistently applied and enforced. The department's processes were not clear in the steps that need to be followed in non-compliance matters. In 2012 we found the department had made progress in implementing this recommendation.

What we found

We found that the department has fully implemented our final recommendation. Systems for monitoring training providers have been improved by implementing a detailed monitoring, auditing and remedial action policy that requires the department to perform regular audits of training providers and perform follow-up procedures on post-audit action plans. Reports have been developed to monitor whether training providers are meeting performance outcomes and expectations.

Why this is important to Albertans

We did the original audit because the department provides funding to training providers to provide training to learners. Training providers with poor performance may continue to receive funding from the department and provide training to learners that do not improve employment and training program outcomes.

¹ *Report of the Auditor General of Alberta—October 2008*, pages 243-253.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The scope of our audit was to determine if the department had implemented the outstanding recommendation that we had made in 2008,² dealing with monitoring of tuition-based training providers.

FINDINGS

Improve monitoring of tuition-based training providers—implemented

The department implemented our recommendation³ by:

- implementing the monitoring, auditing and remedial action policy that requires:
 - regional offices to perform, at minimum, annual monitoring procedures on training providers
 - internal audit to assess every training provider’s compliance with policies and regulations at least once every three years
 - training providers to implement post-audit action plans to deal with non-compliance issues, or face remedial action
 - regional offices to monitor the training providers’ implementation of the post-audit action plans
 - the internal audit unit, regional representatives and delivery partnerships unit to review results at the end of the monitoring period, to ensure that post-audit action plans are implemented
- developing outcome and indicator reports that are used to monitor whether training providers are meeting the performance outcomes

² Ibid.

³ *Report of the Auditor General of Alberta—October 2008*, no. 24, page 245.